

UPTON SINCLAIR SUGGESTS REMEDY FOR SLAUGHTER-HOUSE HORRORS

UPTON SINCLAIR, BEEF TRUST PROBER.

Sixth and Last Article in the Series
Written by the Author of "The Jungle" Especially for The Evening World.

PROOF THAT MEAT IS SOLD
WHICH IS UNFIT TO EAT.

German System of Municipal Slaughter-Houses,
Which Are Run Like Hospitals, Says Mr.
Sinclair, Would Wipe Out All
the Present Evils.

The Evening World to-day presents the sixth and last article in the series written exclusively for this newspaper by Upton Sinclair, author of "The Jungle," dealing with the horrors of the Chicago packing-houses and the condemned meat industry. Having proved his case and told how he obtained his information, Mr. Sinclair suggests as a remedy for the evil the establishment of municipal slaughter-houses on the plan of Germany, where they are operated like hospitals, on a clean and sanitary basis, obviating all possibility of tainted or diseased meat being sold to consumers in the retail markets.

VI.

BY UPTON SINCLAIR.

In the preceding papers of this series I have told a little of what myself saw of the Condemned-Meat Industry, and also of the conditions of living and working of the wage-slaves of the Beef Trust. It seems to me that it will be well in the concluding paper to say something about the remedy for these evil conditions, so that the reader may be left, not with a sense of helplessness and despair, but with an idea of something to work for. I take it for granted that no right-minded and honest human being can read of such things without a desire to do what lies in his power to remedy them.

If there are any who are still unconvinced by all the evidence which has been offered, both officially and unofficially, during the last two weeks, I shall not stop to argue with them. I shall assume for the purpose of the present discussion that two propositions have been proven: First, that the Beef Trust sells a great deal of food which is not fit to be eaten, and prepares it in unhealthy surroundings; and, second, that it maltreats its working people, and pays them less than a living wage.

Let us consider the first proposition. I recollect when I first came to this task and tried to get other people to believe the things which I had seen with my own eyes, the arguments which were brought against me. They were impossible, everybody said. In the first place, as a simple business proposition, it would not pay the big packers to do the things which I described; they had too much at stake, they had too much to lose. Everything that they did had to be done through the agency of workmen; and so their workmen would know about everything; and so, sooner or later, the public would find out about it. The large scale upon which everything was done was sufficient guarantee that it would be done properly. I used to smile, recollecting how I myself had believed in the same arguments once upon a time. Once upon a time, going upon a camping trip, I had taken with me six cans of Armour's "potted ham," thinking it would be a good article to have in case of emergency. I spread it upon a sandwich, and tried to eat it, but could not; and I recollect my perplexity—thinking how Armour's was a great big concern, which advertised a great deal, and ought therefore to be reliable.

Now, what is the matter of fact? The size and power of Armour & Co. has produced, and naturally would produce, exactly the opposite effect.

It is precisely the bigness of the Armour concern which makes it worth while for it to practice these abominations, and also which enables it to practice them with impunity. Old Armour did not rise to power by selling excellent wares to the public; he rose by railroad rebates and similar commercial trickery; and once having the money, he could force his competitors out of business, and furnish the public with what he chose; and finally, when an attempt was made to punish him he could use his wealth to outwit the law. He could also use it to fill the newspapers with advertisements, and the minds of the people with lies.

And you must also understand that it is the large scale upon which every industry is carried out in Packingtown that makes these evil practices so profitable. A man who owned a bristle of every hog which is killed in Packingtown would have a considerable addition to his income; while a man who owned all the diseased meat which is killed there would be ten times over eligible for the United States Senate. When you kill many millions of hogs a year, every tiniest portion of a hog becomes worth considering.

It is proposed to do away with these evils by passing a new inspection law. I am, of course, in favor of such a law, as a step upon the way, but I am quite sure that it will not permanently abolish the evil. The public clamor will die away, and everybody will forget all about the Condemned-Meat Industry; and meantime the enforcement of the law will mean the loss of many millions of dollars every single week to the packers. Consequently they will be devoting every effort to thwarting it; and as soon as the attention of the public is relaxed, they will corrupt the inspectors, and tone down the regulations, and gradually take the starch out of the service. And meantime, owing the local government in Chicago as they do (to say nothing of the newspapers), they will again be having their way with the local inspectors, and will be killing all the diseased meat for local consumption; and the very same things will be done in New York, and Kansas City, and Baltimore, and Boston, and St. Louis, and everywhere else where they have their great meat factories. It is all a delusion to talk about appealing to the public conscience, and so making graft impossible; there are too many varieties of graft clamoring for attention. The public is now thinking about meat, and has forgotten all about life insurance. A few months from now, perhaps it will be thinking about railroads, and will have forgotten all about meat; and then it will be thinking about banks, and will have forgotten all about railroads; and so on.

No, you must go deeper down if you would strike at the root of this evil. If you examine all these foul practices which have been described in such detail, you will find that they are the consequences of the fact that the food-supply of the nation is prepared by men who are not interested in the public welfare, but do the work merely in order to make money out of it. Public service for private profit is the cause of the trouble. It will take a long time for public opinion to come to that conclusion; it may have to go to sleep again, and get another rude jar, and face another scandal; but sooner or later it will be forced



Upton Sinclair.

MYSTERIES OF "POTTED CHICKEN" ARE EXPOSED.

They advertised "potted chicken"—and it was like the boarding-house soup of the comic papers, through which the chicken had walked with rubbers on. Perhaps they had a secret process for making chickens chemically—who knows? said Jurgis's friend; the things that went into the mixture were tripe and the fat of pork and beef suet, and hearts of beef, and finally the waste ends of veal, when they had any. They put these up in several grades and sold them at several prices; but the contents of the can all came out of the same hopper. And then there was "potted grouse," "potted ham" and "devilled ham"—devilled ham, as the men called it. "Devilled" ham was made out of the waste ends of smoked beef that were too small to be sliced by the machines; and also tripe, dyed with chemicals so that it would not show white; and trimmings of ham and corned beef; and potatoes, skins and all; and finally the hard, cartilaginous gullets of beef, after the tongue had been cut out. All this ingenious mixture was ground up and flavored by spices to taste like something.—FROM "THE JUNGLE."

to the conclusion that Ogden Armour and Nelson Morris, commercial pirates, are not fit persons to be trusted with the preparation of their daily food.

The remedy is particularly easy to point out in this case, because it has been applied with such success in Germany and all the other countries of Europe. We have nothing to do but import their system of municipal slaughter-houses. In every large city on the Continent you will find a model slaughter-house, constructed upon the newest scientific lines, and owned by the public and doing work for the public. This slaughter-house kills animals for any person who brings them, and charges so much per head. Every animal is inspected, and the cost of inspection is included in the fee. The inspection is most rigid, and because the industry is not concentrated in a few hands, and there is no powerful combine to corrupt the government, the inspection is honest. Twelve samples are cut from every carcass, and these samples are examined microscopically for traces of disease, and none but sound carcasses are passed. Under the law all carcasses which are rejected are traced back, and the man who has brought them may collect from the man who sold them to him. Thus the disease is followed to its source, which is the stock-breeder. And as the stock-breeder finds that he cannot sell diseased animals anywhere, he stops breeding diseased animals, and cleans up his barns and stables; and thus the percentage of disease in animals is reduced year by year.

One of the things which the man who is working for reform in packing-house conditions hears most frequently is the sneers that he knows nothing about the practical side of the business; that he thinks a slaughter-house ought to be like a flower-garden. All of which only proves the depths of the ignorance in which we are sunk. Strange and startling as it may seem, there is not the least reason in the world why a slaughter-house should be a dirty place. No modern slaughter-house—no slaughter-house in any city where scientists are consulted—is dirty. There is no more reason why it should be than why a hospital should be. And what would you think of a surgeon who said that the walls and pillars of his operating-room must necessarily be caked with the blood of several millions of patients?

The modern municipal slaughter-houses of Germany and Belgium are built and run like hospitals. To begin at the very beginning, the cars which bring the animals have concrete floors, and every day when they are emptied they are washed out with jets of boiling water. The pens in which the cattle are kept all have concrete floors, sloped so as to give perfect drainage; and these, too, are washed out every day. The slaughter-house itself is a single-story building, open to the air and sunlight. It is built so that the blood is promptly drained away. The floors are all of cement, the walls of glass and steel. There is a portable hot water apparatus with hose attached, and every corner of the building is flushed with boiling water every day. The workmen are municipal employees; they receive living wages. The inspectors are scientists, and have absolute charge of the whole procedure—instead of being chased about from pillar to post as the poor Packingtown inspectors are, and treated like impudent schoolboys if they presume to make a suggestion.

I had the opportunity of making a tour of the Chicago packing-houses with Mr. Adolph Smith, the special correspondent sent out by the London Lancet, the leading medical paper of Great Britain. Mr. Smith is a specialist in slaughter-house conditions, having made a study for the Lancet of abattoirs in every country of the civilized world. He declared that nowhere had he ever seen such conditions as he saw in Chicago, and he said that the difference between conditions there and those in the model places such as I have been describing, were simply the difference between civilization and barbarism.

I see by the papers that Mayor Dunne is proposing a municipal slaughter-house for Chicago. The idea is a new one, but it will take root. When the American people set seriously to work to break the power of the Beef Trust magnates, this is what they will do. They will build in every city and large town of the country a model municipal slaughter-house, or group of slaughter-houses, capable of doing the work for that entire vicinity. They will establish upon their government-owned railroads a system of stock-cars and refrigerator-cars, and every farmer and stock-raiser over this country who has cattle to send to market will send them there to be killed and inspected under the authority of the Federal, State or municipal authorities, and then shipped, subject to his direction, to his commission man or customer. Such a plan as this, systematically and resolutely undertaken, would put the Beef Trust out of business in a couple of years, and would from the price of meat and of every meat-product about five cents a pound—and incidentally the price of leather and all other by-products. It would earn for every stock-raiser a fair profit for his labor. And, above all, and most important of all, it would put an end forever to the Condemned-Meat Industry.

ROOSEVELT TELLS WADSWORTH MEAT BILL IS A SHAM

Court Review Clause Is
All in Favor of the
Packers.

WASHINGTON, June 14.—President Roosevelt has added another chapter to the literature of the meat inspection controversy. It is stated for him that it was not through any desire of his that the correspondence between himself and Representative Wadsworth, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, was published in its entirety.

Inasmuch, however, as Mr. Wadsworth deemed it desirable that the letters should be published and gave them to the public, the President regards it as proper to complete the correspondence thus far exchanged by the publication of his reply to Mr. Wadsworth's letter.

Error Not So Bad.

In his letter Mr. Roosevelt, while admitting his error in stating that the House substitute contained no provision for the inspections of the packing-houses at all hours of the day or night, says the substitute still is inadequate to meet the requirements of the situation. The President declares that after a conference with Representative Adams, of Wisconsin, a member of the Agriculture Committee, he is convinced Mr. Adams will accept the suggestions made to him regarding the bill.

No Sham Inspection.

The President adds that he is not concerned about the language of the amendment, but with the accomplishment of the object in view: "A thorough and rigid and not a sham inspection."

Following is the text of the President's letter to Chairman Wadsworth:

"White House."

"Washington, June 15, 1906."

"My Dear Wadsworth: In the first place, I wish to promptly acknowledge the one portion of your letter in which you are in the main right. I was in error in the statement which I accepted from Senator Beveridge, that there was no provision for making the plants accessible at all hours to the inspectors."

"The provision was put in in another place, but it is not as good as the original provision."

The court provision is the one to which I most object, although by no means the only one to which I object; it is one of many. As regards this, I wish to repeat that if deliberation is designed to prevent the remedying of the evils complained of, this is the exact provision which the friends of the packers and the packers themselves would have provided.

Court Review Not Needed.

"It is absurd to assert that any such provision is needed. Why have you not put such provision in the bill? In the law as it affects fraudulent entries of homesteads, etc., etc., Congress cannot see how to prevent the fraudulent entries of the packers or of anyone else, to the protection of the courts."

"But such a provision as that under consideration does not represent a desire to secure the constitutional rights of any man. It represents doubtless, in some cases, a desire to wholly mistaken conviction; in other cases it represents a deliberate purpose to interfere with effective administration, by trying to provide that the courts shall in reality do administrative work, which they would be the first to assert their inability to perform."

"If the bill as you reported it from the committee were enacted into law you would have the functions of the Department of Agriculture narrowly limited, so as to be purely ministerial; and when a given product was unsound, acting on the judgment of the Government experts, you would be on the judge, with no knowledge whatever of the conditions, the burden of stating whether or not the Secretary was right."

Hits Chicago Judge.

"In Chicago, for instance, you would make any judge whom the packers chose to designate, and not the experts of the Department of Agriculture, the man to decide on any question of any kind which the packers thought it worth while to dispute."

"You may possibly remember the recent judicial decision in Chicago in which the packers were concerned. I wish to repeat that this provision is in my judgment one which, if enacted into law, will nullify the major part of the good which can be expected from the enactment of this law."

You assert that the packers insist upon having a rigid inspection law passed. If they sincerely desire a rigid inspection law they will insist upon being given the right to have it. Leaving it in its present form with securing a properly efficient law."

Falls in Purpose.

"To so much of your letter as speaks of my private inquiries about a Committee of the House, or of your knowledge of the English language, etc., etc., I do not need to make any answer. You state that if I or my advisers will point out specifically wherein the bill fails to accomplish its purpose, it will be promptly remedied."

I am happy to tell you that I have to-day seen a member of your committee, Mr. Adams, seeing him by request of the Speaker, and I went over with him the bill. Mr. Adams and Mr. Reynolds, the various points in which the bill as you have reported it fails to accomplish its purpose, and necessary in each case to remedy the failure, and in each case Mr. Adams stated that he personally would accept the alternative we proposed."

"I agree with me that the court review proposition should be excluded. He agrees as to the dozen other changes which I think should be made. If these changes, which Mr. Adams may be thinks should be adopted, are adopted, your amendment will become as good as the Beveridge amendment. In Mr. McCabe's opinion somewhat better than the Beveridge amendment is if unchanged."

Wants Honest Law.

"I care not a whit for the language of the amendment. What I am concerned with is to have it accomplish the object I have in view: namely, a thorough and rigid, and not a sham inspection."

"The enactment of the amendment as reported by you fails to accomplish this object, whereas the Beveridge amendment, and the House amendment, with the changes which Mr. Adams has stated he will gladly accept, both substantially accomplish the purpose I have in view."

"I will accordingly gladly accept either or both which will accomplish this end. Yours truly,"

"Hon. James W. Wadsworth, Chairman Committee on Agriculture."

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